

Playground equipment safety questioned

536 children injured

BY CHRIS TRABER
Staff Writer

Playground safety has come under fire once again after statistics show 536 York Region children were sent to hospital after playground mishaps in 2002-03.

Of those visits by children from birth to age nine, 28 were admitted, but there were no fatalities, York Region Health Services public health nurse Michelle Johnson said.

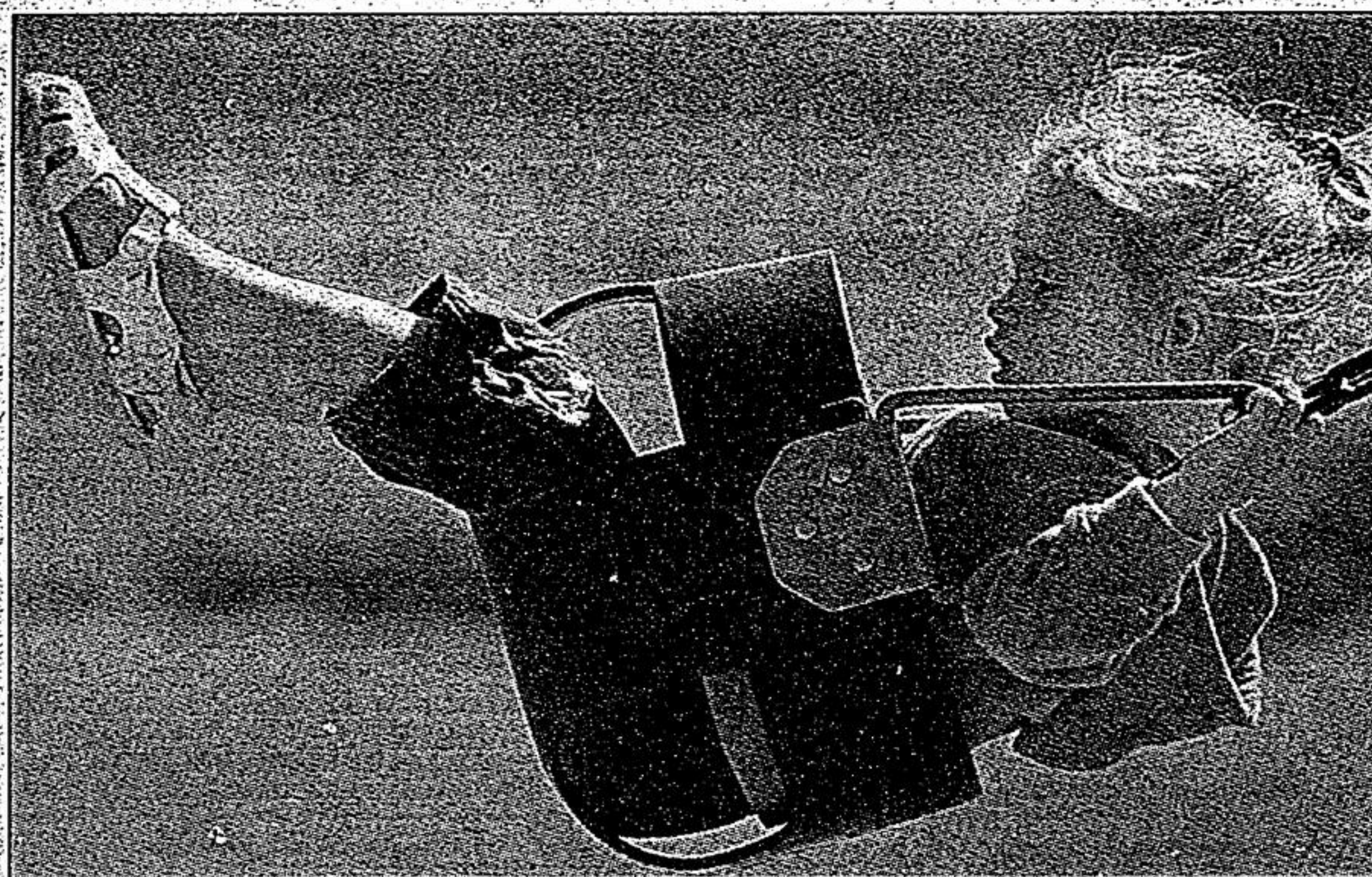
"Our focus is injury prevention and education within the community," said Ms. Johnson, a health services injury prevention team member. "The most important thing parents must do is supervise children at playgrounds and know the capabilities of their child. Children should only be allowed on age appropriate equipment and should not be allowed to play while wearing necklaces, scarves or clothing with draw strings."

'If there's a problem, we close part or all of the playground.'

Playgrounds are potentially more dangerous in winter, she warned.

"When surfaces freeze, parents and kids have to exercise extra caution," Ms. Johnson said. "Surfaces are slippery and kids should wear neck warmers instead of scarves."

Second only to cycling misadventures, some 28,500 Canadian youths under 20 are treated for playground-related injuries annually. Falls are the most common injury. However, of the 18 Canadian children who died from playground injuries between 1982 and 1999, as reported by Safe Kids Canada, 17 were by strangulation.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

York Region's health department inspects public playground equipment.

York Region Health Services health protection division manager Joseph Mancuso is responsible for the playground safety program. His department inspects and tests 155 daycare playgrounds in York Region.

"We look at two categories, critical and non-critical," he said. "Within the critical category, we inspect for entanglement, head and neck entrapment points and pinch, shear and crush points and ensure there are sufficient protection surfaces. If there's a problem, we close part or all of the playground and can issue an order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act."

Supervision and common sense are the best safeguards against playground injuries, Mr. Mancuso said.

Before children play, it's recommended parents look around for sharp objects, protrusions and animal matter, he said, adding it's important to make sure all railings and protective coverings

are in place.

Parents and caregivers shouldn't discourage children from using playgrounds. Instead, children should be encouraged to learn the rules of playground safety, Ms. Johnson said.

Home play equipment is not exempt. Manufacturers' recommended instructions for installation and usage must be followed. Inspect equipment for detached parts, splintered wood and frayed ropes.

A recent study conducted by the Canadian Institute for Health Research advised most of the 8,698 reported playground injuries in Ontario last year involved youngsters between the ages of five and nine.

In 590 cases, the injury required at least one night in hospital.

Playground safety guidelines are available from the Keeping Yorkids Safe program at 1-800-361-5653 and on line at www.safekidscanada.ca

Crown Mouldings & Ceiling Makeovers

FALL Specials

- 5" Crown Moulding from \$4.95 lin. ft.
- 7" Crown Moulding from \$5.95 lin. ft.
- Crown Moulding by Plasterworks fr. \$3.95 ft.
- Yes! You can replace builders' stucco ceilings!
- Ceiling Makeovers from \$2.50 sq. ft.
- Baseboard & Casing Upgrades: Panels.
- Pot lights installed from \$149.00 ea.
- Financing Available (OAC)

Free In-Home Estimates

Locally manufactured and professionally installed.
905-669-0505 Toll Free 1-866-869-TRIM (8746)
www.CanadianTrim.ca

MOVING YORK
MOVING YOU

YRT
YORK REGION TRANSIT
MOVING YORK

NEW
service for
Whitchurch-
Stouffville

Get on Board

York Region Transit (YRT) is bringing service to your town!

Route 9 - Stouffville

YRT is pleased to introduce Route 9 - Stouffville to the Whitchurch-Stouffville community. The Route 9 can get you to work, school and everywhere in between.

The YRT Route 9 - Stouffville starts September 7, 2004!

Get your tickets at:

- Candlelight & Memories Tea Room, 6198 Main St., Stouffville
- A & P Food Stores, 5612 Main St., Stouffville

The Route 9 can connect you to YRT routes across the Region. Locally, the Route 9 can get you to:

- Markham Stouffville Hospital
- Stouffville GO Station
- Parkview Centre/Eastern Gate
- Stouffville District High School and more!

For more information call:

Local: 905-762-2100 • Toll Free: 1-866-MOVE-YRT (668-3978)
TTY/Teletypewriters:
Local: 905-881-5167 • Toll Free: 1-866-276-7478
www.yorkregiontransit.com



The Regional Municipality of York NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE York Regional Sewer Use By-law No. S-57-92-155 Update

The Regional Municipality of York is updating its Sewer Use By-law. The proposed by-law contains new limits, prohibitions and conditions to better protect sanitary sewers and the receiving sewage treatment plants from discharges from commercial and industrial sites. Environmental trends, changes and issues are acknowledged in the proposed by-law to ensure it is a relevant and effective regulatory document. Interested parties are invited to attend a Public Information Centre to be held:

Date: Wednesday, September 1, 2004
Time: 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Seminar Room at York Regional Administration Centre
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, Ontario

At this Information Centre, information regarding the importance of updating the existing by-law will be presented. Comments or concerns will be received at the Public Information Centre until September 8, 2004.

To obtain additional information or if you are unable to attend the Public Information Centre and wish to provide your comments, please contact:

Mr. Dean Rurak, P.Eng.
Manager, Operations Support
Regional Municipality of York
Transportation and Works Dept.
Water & Wastewater Branch
17250 Yonge Street, Box 147
Newmarket, Ontario
L3Y 6Z1
phone: (877) 464-9675 ext. 5159
fax: (905) 830-6927



20/20 SALE

YES, YOUR VISION IS PERFECT
AND SO ARE OUR PRICES!
WE'RE CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

SAVE 20% OFF ALL NEW FALL ARRIVALS.

SAVE AN ADDITIONAL 20% OFF
ALL DRASTICALLY REDUCED FASHION ITEMS.

HURRY-IN SALE ENDS LABOUR DAY, *Kia's*
(OF COURSE WE'RE OPEN!)

159 Main St.
Unionville

7 Days a Week Until 5:30
or CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT (905) 477-4077

B
I
G
S
A
L
E
20% OFF
NEW FALL
W
O
W
Until Sept. 6

WOW